

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cancellation of Proposed Divine Strake Experiment

The Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) has decided to cancel the proposed Divine Strake experiment. "I have become convinced that it's time to look at alternative methods that obviate the need for this type of large-scale test," said DTRA Director Dr. James A. Tegnalia. This decision was not based on any technical information that indicates the test would produce harm to workers, the general public, or the environment.

Divine Strake was a scientific experiment designed to significantly advance the nation's ability to defeat underground facilities that produce and store weapons of mass destruction. The experiment would have entailed detonating a large amount of a common blasting agent over an existing tunnel at the Nevada Test Site. It was to be the largest in a series of experiments that relied on the specific geology at that location.

DTRA will attempt to develop alternative scientific means for obtaining the important data that this experiment would have provided. Such methods to assess capabilities to defeat underground facilities do not currently exist. The agency will develop advanced analysis techniques and conduct confirmatory experiments at a much smaller scale to assist in developing new capabilities to defeat underground facilities.

There is a national consensus on the need to improve conventional capabilities to defeat underground targets that pose a threat to the United States. "DTRA remains committed to help develop non-nuclear means to defeat underground targets. I am optimistic that we will succeed," said Tegnalia.

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